

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 BOGOTA 04001 021917Z  
ACTION ARA-14

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UNCLAS BOGOTA 4001

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y - T E X T

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: BEXP, BTRA, CO  
SUBJ: EXPOSITIONS AND CONVENTIONS: NEW ARRANGEMENTS FOR  
FOREIGN BUYER GROUPS

REF: PASTORINO/MILLER TELECON OF MARCH 1978

1. POST HAS BEEN INFORMED BY LOCAL BRANIFF REPS THAT EMBASSY  
TOUR CONDUCTOR OF FOREIGN BUYER GROUPS (FBGS) WILL NO LONGER  
BE ALLOWED TO TRAVEL ALONRE ONE OR TWO DAYS PRIOR TO THE DEPARTURE  
OF THE GROUP, AND WILL IN THE FUTURE HAVE TO TRAVEL ALONG  
WITH THE GROUP. WE HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT THIS IS NOW AN INTER-  
NATIONAL AIR TRANSPORT ASSOCIATION (IATA) REGULATION FOR THE  
AWARDING OF A FREE TICKET FOR THE TOUR CONDUCTOR.

2. THE ENFORCEMENT OF THIS REGULATION MEANS THAT MANY LAST  
MINUTE DETAILS WHICH TOUR CONDUCTOR WAS PREVIOUSLY ABLE TO  
DO BEFORE THE GROUP'S ARRIVAL (HOTEL-PRE-REGISTRATION  
CLEARANCE, CHARTER OF A BUS FOR AIRPORT ARRIVAL AND OTHER  
USES, ACQUISITION OF SHOW/EXHIBITION CREDENTIALS PREPARATION  
OF "WELCOME KITS", ETC.) WILL NOW HAVE TO BE DONE BY SOMEONE  
ELSE, WITH THE PROBABLE RESULT THAT THE FBG WILL NOT FUNCTION  
AS SMOOTHLY AS BEFORE.

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3. EMBASSY WOULD LIKE TO CONTINUE HAVING THE CONDUCTOR  
TRAVEL TO THE U.S. IN ADVANCE TO ASSURE FULL SUCCESS OF THE MISSION,  
AND WE REQUEST THAT USDOC CONSULT WITH BRANIFF AND/OR CAB  
IN ORDER TO OBTAIN EXCEPTION TO ABOVE-CITED REGULATION.  
FBGS ARE AN OFFICIAL ACTIVITY, AND ONE OF USDOC'S MOST SUCCESSFUL  
PROGRAMS FROM COST/ BENEFIT POINT OF VIEW. FOR EXAMPLE,  
A FBG FROM COLOMBIA IN 1976 TO THE INTERNATIONAL MACHINE TOOL

SHOW GENERATED 3.4 MILLION DOLLARS IN SALES, WITH MINIMUM COST TO USG. CONFUSION IN ARRIVAL/ATTENDANCE ARRANGEMENTS IS EMBARRASING TO EMBASSY OFFICIALS AND DAMAGES U.S. IMAGE OF EFFICIENCY. TWO OR THREE HOURS SPENT AT EXHIBITIONS TO OBTAIN CREDENTIALS MEANS THAT MUCH LESS TIME FOR VISITING BUSINESSMEN TO VISIT EXHIBITS, MAKE PURCHASES, ETC.

4. IF PREVIOUS ARRANGEMENTS IS NOT FEASIBLE, EMBASSY WOULD USE THE SERVICES OF TRAVEL AGENCIES. EMBASSY HAS HAD DISCUSSIONS ON THIS SUBJECT WITH TWO LOCAL TRAVEL AGENCIES (ONE IS REP OF AMERICAN EXPRESS, THE OTHER IS REP OF WAGON-LITS). BOTH HAVE INDICATED THAT THEY WOULD LIKE TO HANDLE ALL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE EMBASSY AT NO COST, FIGURING THAT THEY WILL MAKE THEIR EXPENSES AND PROFITS FROM AIRLINE AND HOTEL COMMISSIONS, OFFERS OF EVENING ENTERTAINMENT PACKAGES, AND FROM THE DEVELOPMENT OF FUTURE BUSINESS. THIS ALTERNATIVE NOT AS SATISFACTORY TO EMBASSY, OF COURSE, BECAUSE OF LACK OF DIRECT CONTROL AND SUPERVISION. ANOTHER ALTERNATIVE WOULD BE TO CONTRACT WITH A U.S. TOUR OPERATOR FOR THE LAND PORTION AND CHARGE FBG PARTICIPANTS TO COVER THE COSTS.

5. IF NECESSARY, EMBASSY IS PREPARED TO TRY THE ROUTE INDICATED IN PRECEDING PARAGRAPH, WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THE USDOC FIELD OFFICE NEAREST TO ANY PARTICULAR SHOW WILL BE PREPARED TO LEND ASSISTANCE AS THE NEED MAY ARISE (E.G., SOLICITING HELP FROM LOCAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
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OR CITY TOURIST AND CONVENTION BUREAU, PROVIDING ASSISTANCE IN OBTAINING CREDENTIALS, ETC.) PERHAPS USDOC COULD TEMPORARILY INCREASE STAFF IN REGIONAL OFFICES FOR IMPORTANT SHOWS.

6. EMBASSY HAS ALSO DISCUSSED WITH BRANIFF REPS HERE THE POSSIBILITY OF BRANIFF OFFICES IN THE US HANDLING THE ARRANGEMENTS. HOWEVER, SINCE BRANIFF OFFICES ARE NOT AS WIDESPREAD AS THE TRAVEL AGENCY NETWORKS, AND SINCE PREVIOUS EFFORTS OF THIS NATURE WITH BRANIFF HAVE NOT TURNED OUT SATISFACTORILY, WE BELIEVE THAT BRANIFF DOES NOT HAVE MUCH TO OFFER ON THIS ACCOUNT.

7. ON A RELATED POINT, FSLs WOULD LIKE TO ENSURE THAT THEY RECEIVE FULL, RATHER THAN PARTIAL, PER DIEM WHEN THEY DO NOT RECEIVE COMPLIMENTARY HOTEL ROOMS AS ESCORT OFFICERS.

8. AS EMBASSY HOPES TO HAVE ACTIVE FBG PROGRAM OVER THE COMING MONTHS, AN EARLY RESPONSE TO HIS MESSAGE WOULD BE HELPFUL.  
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